

# Learning English with CBC Calgary

## Weekly Newscast

### December 6th, 2013

Lessons prepared by Justine Light & Kim Chaba-Armstrong

#### Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as an ESL classroom resource



[www.alberta.ca](http://www.alberta.ca)

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

## News Story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

### Vocabulary

Choose the definition that best matches each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
	1. vaccination	a) a planned event or series of events
	2. program	b) a kind of medicine that tries to stop you getting an illness or disease
	3. routine	c) Not forced, by the choice of the person (or his/her parent)
	4. immunization	d) something that is done regularly instead of for a special reason
	5. catch up	e) a kind of medicine that tries to stop you getting an illness or disease
	6. voluntary	f) to do something after the planned earlier time

### Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

**HPV:** HumanPapillomavirus can cause an infection with no symptoms that can lead to cancer.

**Parental Consent:** When a medical procedure is performed on a minor (under 18) at least one parent must agree (Unless it is an emergency and the child's life is in danger).

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

### Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **True** or **False**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. \_\_\_\_ The Alberta government is going to start immunizing boys against HPV.
2. \_\_\_\_ An immunization plan for girls started in 2009.
3. \_\_\_\_ The government says 51% of girls have received the vaccine.
4. \_\_\_\_ HPV infection can lead to cancer.
5. \_\_\_\_ The vaccination program will be voluntary.

**Discussion Questions:** Have you ever been asked for parental consent for a child and not completely understood what you were being asked for? How could your school or doctor help in this situation? Has your child received all of the necessary vaccines? Why or why not? ?

## News Story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

### Vocabulary

Choose the words with similar meaning that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word from the Story	Related words
	1. served	a) fighting (with weapons or words) disagreement
	2. conflict	b) looking into studying
	3. investigating	c) killing yourself self-harm
	4. apparent	d) fighting (with weapons) war
	5. suicide	e) doctor therapist
	6. psychiatrist	f) possible likely
	7. combat	g) work for take part in

### Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

**mental health:** relates to our psychological well-being, how we feel, think and behave

**post-traumatic stress disorder:** a mental health problem that is caused by extreme stress or being very afraid; often found among soldiers who have fought in wars; and it can lead to suicide

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

### Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. Why is Canada's military facing questions about the health support offered to soldiers?
2. How many soldiers have committed suicide in the past week or so?
3. What is one possible reason given for these suicides?
4. Why is post-traumatic stress disorder likely to increase over the next few years?

### Discussion Questions:

Mental health problems often do not get the same amount of help and support as physical problems. Why do you think this is? Why should we pay attention to mental health problems?

### News Story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

### Vocabulary

Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Word	Definition
ranks	put a group in order, highest to lowest
subject	an area of knowledge that is studied, such as English, social studies or biology
decline	to decrease over time; to go down
assessment	a test or measurement of something
remained	stayed the same, did not change or move
stable	not likely to change
resources	money, or funds to achieve something
specialized	detailed knowledge about something

### Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

**statistically significant:** tells us that the results in a study did not happen by chance or bad luck but show some deeper cause or connection.

1. The number of people who watch DVDs has really \_\_\_\_\_ in the past few years.
2. We are going to have a speaking \_\_\_\_\_ at school to see if our level of English has improved.
3. My grandmother has \_\_\_\_\_ in the same house since 1950.
4. I work as an industrial electrician which is a highly \_\_\_\_\_ job.
5. I want the government to put more \_\_\_\_\_ towards education, as I believe it is the future for our province.
6. My daughter's soccer team \_\_\_\_\_ number 1 in the city right now!
7. The temperature in Edmonton is quite \_\_\_\_\_ in the winter; it is cold every day.
8. My favourite \_\_\_\_\_ in high school was art, but I didn't study it in university because I didn't think it would help me to find a job.

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

### Listening Activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences based on what you heard in the audio. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. An international study shows Canadian students' _____ and science scores are _____.	a) math/ declining b) language arts/ improving
2. More than _____ students were assessed in _____ countries.	a) 150,000/ 16 b) 500,000 / 65
3. Over the past _____ years, scores in math have _____.	a) 15/ remained stable b) 9 / decreased
4. The Education Minister thinks more _____ and _____ training for teachers could help.	a) resources/ specialized b) students / teachers

### Discussion Questions:

Why do you think Canadian kids' math scores are declining? What could be done to improve things in Canadian schools?

## Language Focus – The Present Perfect

- We use this verb tense to describe an action that happened some time in the past  
(but no definite time is known or stated.)
- We also use this tense if an event began in the past and still continues today.

**Forming the present perfect:** *has/have + past participle*

Let's look at examples from stories 2 and 3:

Ex: Canada's military is facing more questions about the mental health services available to its members, especially those who **have served** in conflict areas.

- ...the numbers of soldiers dealing with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder are expected to rise within the next decade as the stress of combat takes hold in those who **have returned** from fighting in Afghanistan.
- ... there **has been** a decline over the years in their math and science scores.
- ....performance of the country's 15-year-olds in math **has declined** in the past nine years.
- While performance in reading **has remained** stable, the decline in science performance was described as "statistically significant", from 2009.

Listen to the first story this week. Can you hear the example of the present perfect?

*Answers are in the appendix.*

## Transcripts of Weekly News Stories

	DECEMBER 6TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for December 6th.	0:00
Story 1	Alberta is rolling out an H-P-V school vaccination program for boys. Grade five boys will now be part of the routine immunization program that started for girls in 2008. A four-year catch up program will also be available for boys in grade nine. The government says 61 percent of girls in those grades have received the shots since the program began. H-P-V infections can lead to cancer. There's no cost to students. H-P-V immunization is voluntary -- and parental consent is required.	0:15
Story 2	Canada's military is facing more questions about the mental health services available to its members, especially those who have served in conflict areas. The military is currently investigating the apparent suicides of four soldiers in eight days. Some say the increase in soldier suicides is likely just a small sign of an increasing problem. A military psychiatrist, Colonel Rakesh Jetly says the numbers of soldiers dealing with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder are expected to rise within the next decade as the stress of combat takes hold in those who have returned from fighting in Afghanistan.	01:11
Story 3	A new international study ranks Canadian students among the top of the class in key subject areas, but there has been a decline over the years in their math and science scores. The assessment was done by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. More than 500,000 15-year-old students from 65 countries were tested. While Canada was among the high-level achievers, performance of the country's 15-year-olds in math has declined in the past nine years. While performance in reading has remained stable, the decline in science performance was described as "statistically significant", from 2009. Alberta Education Minister Jeff Johnson says it seems that some of the countries that are doing well spend more resources on teacher quality and making sure that their math teachers have more specialized training.	02:17

## Appendix Answer Keys:

### News Story 1 – Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
<b>b/e</b>	1. vaccination	a) a planned event or series of events
<b>a</b>	2. program	b) a kind of medicine that tries to stop you getting an illness or disease
<b>d</b>	3. routine	c) Not forced, by the choice of the person (or his/her parent)
<b>e/b</b>	4. immunization	d) something that is done regularly instead of for a special reason
<b>f</b>	5. catch up	e) a kind of medicine that tries to stop you getting an illness or disease
<b>c</b>	6. voluntary	f) to do something after the planned earlier time

### Listening

1. T The Alberta government is going to start immunizing boys against HPV.
2. F An immunization plan for girls started in 2009.
3. F The government says 51% of girls have received the vaccine.
4. T HPV infection can lead to cancer.
5. T The vaccination program will be voluntary.

### News Story 2 - Vocabulary

Answer	Word from the Story	Related Words
<b>g</b>	1. served	a) fighting (with weapons or words) disagreement
<b>a</b>	2. conflict	b) looking into studying
<b>b</b>	3. investigating	c) killing yourself self-harm
<b>f</b>	4. apparent	d) fighting (with weapons) war
<b>c</b>	5. suicide	e) doctor therapist
<b>e</b>	6. psychiatrist	f) possible likely
<b>d</b>	7. combat	g) work for take part in



## Listening

1. Why is Canada's military facing questions about the health support offered to soldiers?  
*Because there have been a number of apparent suicides among soldiers in the last week.*
2. How many soldiers have committed suicide in the past week or so?  
*It seems four soldiers have committed suicide in the past week.*
3. What is one possible reason given for these suicides?  
*One reason given is PTSD – post traumatic stress disorder.*
4. Why is post-traumatic stress disorder likely to increase over the next few years?  
*Because the soldiers who have been fighting in Afghanistan are returning and will start and continue to feel the effects of PTSD over the next few years.*

## News Story 3

### Vocabulary

1. The number of people who watch DVDs has really declined in the past few years.
2. We are going to have a speaking assessment at school to see if our level of English has improved.
3. My grandmother has remained in the same house since 1950.
4. I work as an industrial electrician, which is a highly specialized job.
5. I want the government to put more resources towards education, as I believe it is the future for our province.
6. My daughter's soccer team ranks number 1 in the city right now!
7. The temperature in Edmonton is quite stable in the winter; it is cold every day.
8. My favourite subject in high school was art, but I didn't study it in university because I didn't think it would help me to find a job.

## Listening

1. An international study shows Canadian students' _____ and science scores are _____.	a) math/ declining b) language arts/ improving
2. More than _____ students were assessed in _____ countries.	a) 150,000/ 16 b) 500,000 / 65
3. Over the past _____ years, scores in math have _____.	a) 15/ remained stable b) 9 / decreased
4. The Education Minister thinks more _____ and _____ training for teachers could help.	a) resources/ specialized b) students / teachers

## Language Focus

The government says 61 percent of girls in those grades **have received** the shots since the program began.